

by people living in areas abutting African coastlines, creating economic linkages that stretched across the Atlantic and the Mediterranean Sea, as well as the Indian Ocean. Here Getz draws attention to the much-used concept of creole populations and societies to point readers toward understanding that Africa, too, hosted European, Asian, and other immigrants who settled its coast. He also discusses the establishment of racially and ethnically mixed communities (pp. 34–36).

Chapter 3 introduces readers to the importance of understanding the histories and historical contexts of African people. Getz reminds readers of the centrality of the heterogeneous cosmologies, worldviews, and epistemologies that informed and shaped lives and communities. Central to this is the role of spirituality and religion, which the author effectively shows as inextricably linked to all sociocultural institutions. Here readers are introduced to indigenous African religions as well as Christianity and Islam. Chapter 4 brings the previous chapters together by showing readers just how and to what extent African entrepreneurs participated in the rise and sustaining of the industrial revolution. Readers learn that the development of industrial-driven global economies depended on African people's willingness – Getz draws attention to their agency – to establish and maintain relationships with European counterparts. It also introduces the well-known debate about this period's role in shaping later colonial occupation (p. 81).

The book's final chapter focuses on the role of African intellectuals and writers who are sometimes maligned or accused, in hindsight, of abetting the European colonial project. Getz is clear that he is not interested in absolution or placing blame. Instead, he wants us to focus on these men's role in history for having 'recognized that European technology and science were reaching a point where for the first time they were in serious advance of Africans' abilities to resist them militarily or economically' (p. 99). One major consequence would be the destabilization of Africa's cosmopolitanism. Curiously, Getz begins this chapter by posing the question 'Men and women in the middle?', even though these women are never heard in the chapter, nor is their omission addressed. While sources that capture women's intellectual perspectives may not have been available to him, a sentence or two that clarified this for the reader would go far in removing the sense that something seems to have been left out of the chapter.

In five succinct chapters readers are given solid examples of key developments that transpired in the 175-year span covered. Just as importantly, they are told where they can turn to learn more. Each chapter ends with a list of key references that will help readers seeking additional information. Particularly useful to teachers will be the primary source excerpts at the end of each of Chapters 1–4, which make it easy to integrate lessons in primary source analysis.

Cosmopolitan Africa is written in a very accessible style, steering clear of excessive jargon or the need to have prior knowledge of Africa's history. It is a contribution to Oxford University Press's 'African world histories' series and, like other volumes in the series, it ought to be an invaluable resource for teachers and students ranging from high school to college.

Bonded labour and debt in the Indian Ocean world

Edited By Gwyn Campbell and Alessandro Stanziani. London: Pickering & Chatto Ltd., 2013. Pp. xiii + 240. Hardback £60.00, ISBN 978-1-84893-378-1.

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'Bondage in the Indian Ocean World (IOW) cannot be studied on the basis of the usual transatlantic paradigm' (p. 77), states Alessandro Stanziani while examining the development of labour systems within colonial Mauritius. Indeed, a distinct methodological approach is required to make sense of the complex amalgam of national indentured servitude models from Europe, of New World colonial experiences, and of a variety of indigenous traditions of bonded labour traversing a myriad of religious, cultural, climatic, and economic frontiers. *Bonded labour and debt* provides such an approach, both innovative and transnational, to evaluate the historical development of IOW labour systems in the context of the emerging global economy from the seventeenth century onwards. Within this macro-geographical region, stretching from Africa to the Far East, debt bondage became the predominant source of manpower by the nineteenth century, and

has continued to shape IOW labour relations down to the present.

The surging international demand for IOW commodities during the period – exemplified by Matthew Hopper's analysis of the Arabian Gulf pearl trade, where prices soared 800% from 1873 to 1906 – created an unprecedented shortage in manpower and required new forms of bonded labour able to meet production requirements (p. 105). While these emerging forms of bondage did not directly imitate the chattel slavery of the transatlantic, they were 'in reality ... little more than slavery by a different name' (p. 116). Undoubtedly, the confluence of colonial and local elite interests sought to undermine physical slavery while simultaneously providing the pretext for the significant expansion of bonded labour. For colonial officials, abolition meant an influx of tax revenue as former slaves joined the taxable base, epitomized by British administrators' support of Islamic *ulema* in what William Clarence-Smith describes as 'sharia-minded', anti-slavery reforms (p. 25). Contemporaneously, indigenous rulers sought larger 'free' labour pools to undertake increasingly sophisticated infrastructure projects, as Gwyn Campbell explores in imperial Madagascar (p. 47). Furthermore, as Bok-rae Kim's examination of Chosun Korea illuminates, the replacement of slavery with varying forms of indentured bondage also blunted the power of slave-owning elites.

Debt, whether monetary or material, was the predominant driver of indentured labour within the IOW. Local populations were thrust into a self-sustaining vortex of indebtedness, exacerbated by both manmade and natural pressures. More prolific tax collection from the poor encouraged bureaucracies and militaries to burgeon, while the construction of major road and irrigation systems accelerated the spread of diseases such as cholera and malaria throughout the region, further reducing the available labour pool. However, it was the brutal weather patterns which bore the prime responsibility for propelling most into debt servitude. Bounded by the climatic extremes of seasonal monsoons, the subsistence agrarian peasantry often required advances of produce, livestock, or currency from wealthier patrons in order to survive. When loans, frequently with interest rates in excess of 100% of capital, went unpaid, many were forced to sell children, wives, and whole families into bondage as repayment, as Edward Alpers charts in East Africa.

Indigenous forms of physical and psychological bondage nevertheless continued to influence the

development of bonded labour. The kidnapping and ransoming of Filipinos by Sulu Zone slave raiders, scrutinized by James Francis Warren, became economically fundamental to Sulu Sultanate commerce while simultaneously providing a steady stream of bonded labour for European markets in the Philippines (p. 87). Moreover, psychological bondage in cultures with highly defined systems of honour, such as the Filipino cultural tradition of 'debt of gratitude' investigated by Michael Salman, meant that women were often chastised by their own kin for not corporeally repaying their exploiters' patronage for their families (p. 147). Similar cultural traditions in Edo-period Japan, outlined by Yoko Matsui, viewed prostitution as a virtuous use of women's bodies when dedicated to lifting their families out of poverty (p. 176).

Given the geographical purvey of the work, it is surprising that there are no contributions on other major debt-servitude markets within the IOW. While the Dutch East Indies are briefly mentioned by Susan Newton-King (p. 61, to highlight the globalized personal networks of freed slaves in the Dutch-owned Cape Colony), an examination of Indonesia, or Indochina for that matter, is conspicuously absent in this otherwise thorough anthology. Furthermore, although the work makes a compelling case for studying the intersection of colonial and indigenous labour traditions, the colonial aspect seems to be treated as a monolithic, occidental 'other'. There is no comparative analysis of disparate colonial systems operating simultaneously in the same region, like the environs of the modern Tamil Nadu state in India, which incorporated coexistent French, British, Dutch, and Danish settlements from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century. Such Saidean generalities of the 'occident' miss the dynamic, trans-colonial aspects of the region, where varying European philosophical, legal, colonial, and economic traditions converged.

From a 'peripheral' perspective, the work declines to elaborate on the influences of IOW societies on each other. The vast 'coolie' labour trade brought thousands of indentured Chinese and Indians into direct contact with other IOW societies. While Ei Murakami explores the effects of the 'coolie' exodus on labour practices in southern China, crucial questions are left unanswered by the work. How did periphery-to-periphery interaction reshape local ideas on debt bondage, and how did returning 'coolies' transplant labour traditions from other IOW societies within India or China? Often the influences of other peripheral societies are just as pivotal in transforming

the periphery as those of the core, as the historical development of Singapore demonstrates.

Despite the absence of certain lines of inquiry, *Bonded labour and debt* makes a significant contribution to global economic history. The work is both a foil to, and extension of, Atlantic history, as economic and labour models from New World colonial experiences were adopted and adapted within the globalized realities of neo-imperialism in the Old World. Regrettably, decolonization did not bring the necessary reforms to lessen the region's reliance on bonded labour. Isabelle Guérin's examination of contemporary debt bondage in the brick, sugar cane, and rice industries of Tamil Nadu state reveals that 'owners of capital are exploiting intensively cast institutions to control labour', despite decades of government intervention and oversight (p. 132). The historical traditions which continue to influence forms of IOW labour today certainly merit further research.

Crossing the Bay of Bengal: the furies of nature and the fortunes of migrants

By Sunil S. Amirth. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013. Pp. 268. 22 halftones, 3 maps. Hardback £22.95, ISBN 978-0-674-72483-9.

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This is a beautifully written and sophisticatedly crafted book about migration in the Bay of Bengal, pivoting on the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It reads like a novel. Sunil S. Amirth, a Reader at Birkbeck College London, has the gift of mesmerizing his readers by unearthing forgotten stories about ordinary individuals who made – and lost – their fortunes crossing the Bay of Bengal. If not a novel itself, the book is certainly inspired by novelists such as Joseph Conrad, Michael Ondaatje, and in particular Amitav Ghosh, who, like Amirth, are very much moved by the phenomenon of human migration and the cross-cultural encounters it entails. Hence, Amirth tells wonderful 'road stories', stories that go beyond the boundaries of the modern nation-state and go against claims that it is the nation that inevitably determines people's attachment and identity. But what makes this book really

appealing as a scholarly work is the author's capacity to weave individual stories, unveiled from archives and collected during fieldwork, into a richly textured biography of a region: the Bay of Bengal. Like the peripatetic heroes of his book, Amirth proves himself to be a master in crossing the Bay. As a scholar, he courageously attempts to (re)connect the separated national archives and histories of South and Southeast Asia. By doing so, he convincingly demonstrates that, although people moved back and forth, migration within the Bay of Bengal at this time was comparable in both size and impact to that of the Atlantic.

Amirth argues that, although it was built upon a pre-existing pattern of circulation and movement, the unprecedented migration of labour across the Bay during the second half of the nineteenth century was engendered by imperial conquest and global capitalism. The latter was facilitated by technological breakthroughs such as the Suez Canal, steamships, and railways, all giving easier access to ever more Burmese rice, Sri Lankan tea, and Malayan rubber. These created a huge demand for labour, provided by the Indian subcontinent. Obviously, the result was not only a rise in cross-cultural cosmopolitanism but, equally importantly, an increasingly ruthless exploitation (p. 129: 'blood and dirt') of migrant (enslaved, convicted, or indentured) labour and the natural environment. The book charts in fascinating detail how labour, and to a lesser extent finance, was mobilized, and how this differed across the Bay. Amirth predominantly focuses on the role of the South Indian Tamils and Telugus in Sri Lanka, Burma, and Malaya.

In and after the 1930s, this extensive movement of labour came to an end as a result of the global economic crisis, Japanese conquests, and decolonization. Moreover, through a new emphasis on national boundaries and the increasing importance of citizenship, new, more rigid national identities were imposed on the cosmopolitan migrants all across the Bay of Bengal. Amirth clearly deplors this development, the more so since ecological disaster is now threatening the region as a whole and can only be tackled by the close cooperation of various national governments. Nevertheless, despite the fact that his book emphasizes the dark side of human exploitation and ecological devastation, his message seems to be that we can and should learn something positive from the connected, more cosmopolitan pasts of the Bay of Bengal. He argues that in order to be able to face the current ecological challenge we should see 'the Bay of Bengal whole